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VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE , CALFORNIA

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FEBRUARY, 2013

The Feedline

March Has Both Fantasy & Reality

Well, I decided to write another feedline despite not doing one last month and in order to write one, one has to be in a good or decent mood. I managed to get my dirt cheap MFJ "special" wire dipole antenna up in the air recently with the assistance of Jerry, KD6WKY whose help is appreciated very much. The dipole is high up in the air of almost 40 feet (above ground) with each end tied off at a support pole whose base has both rebar and 2 feet of concrete. What wire dipole I want to eventually put up has to wait until more money shows up given what it needs in order to be an effective antenna. This MFJ "special" antenna is the same one I used at last year's Field Day event and with California QSO event with Jerry, KD6WKY when we set up our operations in a prune orchard including his BuddiPole Deluxe antenna kit.

So with the recent ARRL sponsored DX contest and just my time on the air, I used only 20 watts on the 20 meter band to work a ham down in Argentina (LP1H/ LU5HM) which is just under 6,100 miles distance at 0600 UTC, another ham up in Alaska I used 40 watts on the 80 meter band (AL7LW) which is just about 3,300 miles distance at 0630 UTC, another ham up in Tulelake, CA (K6TLL) using only 50 watts on the 40 meter band, another ham up in Oregon (N7WR) on the 80 meter band at 0735 UTC, another ham up in the northeast area of

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March 14, 2013 Meeting Notes

The Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 1905 at the Elmira Firehouse.

The minutes of the last meeting were discussed and accepted by vote of the board.

The Treasurer report was made by Bob Hewett, K6HEW, showing a total of $2872.00

Chris Jones, NET Coordinator reported that Jerry Olive, KD6WKY will not continue as a week 2 NET CONTROL OPERATOR after June 11, 2013. A new volunteer is requested to take his place.

A discussion about the future way the club operates began when Marcus, KI6WDX asked the question "Do we want to the March of Dimes event or not?"

Discussion among the Board included:

"This is a good training op and if we opt out they will not ask us the following year."

"Other clubs only specialize in narrow operations such as DX, ARES, etc."

"What do we want to do as a focus of our club?"

"We need a direction."

Marcus will query data from a survey to the members of the club as to their desires.

The Board of Directors Meeting adjourned a 1942 and the General Members began immediately after.

Discussion about future focus of the club continued among the membership present. To begin with why did Marcus want advance to a General Class License?" He relied I wanted more frequencies, to learn more.

The point was brought up that the club has fragmented interests and often members gather after the meetings to discuss their own interests.

After much discussion and an impromptu presentation by Bob, K6HEW on Fox Hunts that caught the interest of every one, the following items were offered:

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(The Feedline Continued fron Pg. 1)

Nevada (KE7HTY) on the 80 meter band at 0700 UTC and a few hams in California. I believe I did work a ham back on the east coast during the contest, but won't know until a later date. The point in stating these contacts is that while I have sent emails to other club members about the contacts, nothing has been forthcoming from them as to how well they were and/or are doing with how their station equipment and installed antenna(s). This club has many Extra class operators and a few newly "minted" General class operators. So how is everyone else doing on the HF bands lately? My present goal at this time is to work a ham in each of the 11 western states that I don't already have.

What is surprising about the DX operators is that while I was using a dirt cheap pair of copper wires (MFJ-1778) which is just a G5RV antenna, a 1:1 balun (MFJ-915) with RG-8 mini coax fed into my Yaesu FT-450 and a LDG 10:1 external tuner, the other hams were using much higher power with the ham in Nevada using 1,000 watts and the other hams ranged from between 600 watts down to 50 watts. As for that Argentina contact, I do not remember his power/PEP output. Nearly all of my signal reports from the responding hams were between 59 to 59+ to 599. Each worked ham has been sent a QSL card from me!

I'm also looking into putting up two (2) Rohn towers as I have a decent amount of tower sections that our radio club member Skip, WV6F was nice enough to let me take these slightly used tower sections off of the W6VVR repeater site up on Mt. Vaca. A worthwhile trip up to the repeater site with Jerry, KD6WKY although both going up and down did give us some concern due to road ice we encountered after a recent rain storm passed over the mountain and where the slight ice build-up was on a few well shaded road sections. Look Ma, I did with no chains! I commented as we were going down one iced over road section and if we suddenly found ourselves flying off the cliff due no traction, it was great knowing the other ham operator!

I would like to see other members to step up and involve themselves in this club more than they do presently. I can't do it all by myself and with the recent departure of the club secretary, more duties have fallen on my shoulders and I don't believe that is fair. If this trend continues, the club members will likely see changes and the possible changes will not be popular with the club and its members. That is a guarantee, folks!

Well, that's about all for the moment. Until next month, be safe, be well and G.O.T.A.!
73 Marcus K. Maclean, KI6WDX
President

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB--2013

ELECTED OFFICERS
President: Marcus K. Maclean, KI6WDX
Vice President: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Secretary: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Director: Skip Lawson, AF6HC
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6GZB
Director: Arthur Miller, KI6UXE
Director: Richard Craig, KJ6MIB

APPOINTED POSITIONS
Net Control Chairperson: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Club Activities Chairperson: Board of Directors
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

(March 14, 2013 Meeting Notes)

1. The need for a white board and pens for presentations.
2. The need for hands-on demonstrations and some type of organized program for both new and older members.
3. 20 video presentations are available in the club's library that could be used at meetings. A video from the library named: Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Antennas, But Were Afraid To Ask," will be presented at the next Club Meeting.
4. Three potential mountain top sites may be available for this year's Field Day.
5. We have approximately 15 unpaid members.
6. A reminder that the Hamfest Valley of the Moon will be held at Sonoma on April 27. A flyer will be posted on our web site.
7. Meetings will continue to be held at the Elmira Firehouse on the second Thursday of each month until further notice.

The meeting was closed at 2040.

REMINDER

The next Board of Directors and membership meeting will be held at the Elmira Firehouse on THURSDAY April 11.

The BOD will be at 7:00 PM and the membership at 7:30 PM.

DX

In DX, word that TA1HZ will be in Somalia on a humanitarian mission from March 23rd to April 4th with the organization Yeryuzu Doktorlay. His primary purpose is as a doctor and but also plans some on the air time likely from the city of Mogadishu using the call T5TC. His operation will be on the High Frequency bands using a Kenwood radio and a Windom antenna. If you work him QSL to TA1HZ as per the details found in www.qrz.com.

OE1MWW will be active from the Maldives as 8Q7WK between March 9th to the 23rd. His operation will be holiday style on the High Frequency bands. QSL via his home callsign.

DF8DX will be operational from Tanzania as 5H1DX from April 20th to the 28th. Late reports say that he will be active from different islands including Pemba. QSL via his home call.

G3RWF will be on the air from Rwanda through March 12th likely usi8ng the call sign 9X0NH. Activity will be on most High Frequency bands using mainly CW with some SSB. Logs will be uploaded daily to Logbook of the World. QSL via G3RWF.

F2FD is now active stroke HR5 from Honduras and should be there through May 20th. He states that he will be active as much as possible on CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via F6AJA or Logbook of the World.

SM6CUK will be operational as SA6G/7 from Ven Island between June 10th and the 17th. Activity will be holiday style on the HF bands. QSL via SM6CUK, direct or via the bureau.

G0VJG will be on the air S79VJG from the Seychelles between April 4th to the 16th. Activity will be on the 40 through 10 meters using SSB. QSL via G4DFI.

WORLD AMATEUR RADIO DAY 2013

World Amateur Radio Day is April 18th and according to the International Amateur Radio Union that sponsors the event the theme this year is Amateur Radio: Entering Its Second Century of Disaster Communications.
Amateur Radio

According to the IARU announcement, the theme for 2013 of Amateur Radio: Entering Its Second Century of Disaster Communications is an excellent opportunity for amateur radio emergency communications groups to take advantage of the event to highlight the role amateur radio plays in disaster response.

Among the suggestions are for IARU member societies to arrange ham radio demonstrations in public places such as parks or shopping areas. The IARU says that such demonstrations in public areas usually generate inquiries and questions from the public about amateur radio. It adds that this makes it a great opportunity to attract new people to become members of the ham radio community.

The IARU notes that in 2013, April 18th is a weekday but that should not keep public activity from taking place either on the weekend before or after that date. Also, if you plan on holding a public demonstration, the IARU says not to forget to include some young people to show all ages are a part of this growing world wide public service oriented hobby.

Amateur Radio Newsline, Cheryl Lasaek, K9BIK, in Zion, Illinois.

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: vacavalleyradio.net

Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-)
WV6F 440.025(+)
WV6F 1291.900(-)

PROPAGATION: SOLAR CYCLE 24 MAY HAVE A DOUBLE PEAK

Will 2013 be the year of the Solar maximum of Cycle 24 or have we already seen one and is there another prak yet to come. Some researchers think that the best has not happened yet because this could be another double cycle.

Something unexpected appears to be happening on the sun. 2013 is supposed to be the year of Solar Max also known as the peak of Cycle 24. Yet 2013 has arrived and solar activity is relatively low. Sunspot numbers are well below their values in 2011, and strong solar flares have been infrequent for many months. The quiet has led some observers to wonder if forecasters missed the mark.

Dean Pesnell is a Solar physicist at the Goddard Space Flight Centre in Greenbelt, Maryland. He suggests that this is the solar maximum, but it looks different from what we expected because it will be double peaked.

Conventional wisdom holds that solar activity swings back and forth like a simple pendulum. At one end of the cycle, there is a quiet time with few sunspots and flares. At the other end, the Solar Max brings high sunspot numbers and solar storms with a regular rhythm that repeats every 11 years.

Reality, however, is more complicated. Astronomers have been counting sunspots for centuries, and they have seen that the solar cycle is not perfectly regular. For one thing, the back-and-forth swing in sunspot counts can take anywhere from 10 to 13 years to complete. Also, the amplitude of the cycle varies. Some solar maxima are very weak while others can be very strong.

And as researcher Pesnell notes, there is yet another complication. He says that the last two solar maxima, around 1989 and 2001, had not one but two peaks. He says that solar activity went up, dipped, and then resumed while performing a mini-cycle within the Solar Max that lasted about two years.

Pesnell says that the same thing could be happening now. He notes that sunspot counts jumped in 2011 and dipped in 2012. As such, he expects them to rebound again saying that another peak will happen in 2013 and possibly last into 2014. Lets hope he is right.

Amateur Radio Newsline, Heatrher Embee, B3TZD, in Burwick, Pennsylvania.

NET CONTROL OPERATORS

1st week of month-Jerry Bowen; KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Jerry Olive until June 11
Will need new volunteer after June 11
3rd week of month-Chris Jones; KD7TQO
4th week of month-Marcus MacLean; KI6WDX
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt; K6HEW

UK HAM LOCATES 1965 SATELLITE AS IT RETURNS TO LIFE

An American satellite, abandoned in 1967 as a piece of space junk has begun transmitting again after 46 years and a ham radio operator is responsible for finding it.

Phil Williams, G3YPQ, is an Amateur Radio Astronomer in North Cornwall in the U.K.. According to reports he accidentally picked up the signal and after cross checking with various lists, he identified it as LES 1.

LES 1 was built by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and launched in 1965. The satellite failed to reach its intended orbit owing to a wiring error and has been drifting out of control ever since.

Williams ran across it while monitoring near 237 MHz when he noticed a signal with a peculiar signal drift caused by the bird tumbling end over end every 4 seconds as the solar panels became shadowed by the satellites engine. Williams said that gives the signal a particularly ghostly sound as the voltage from the solar panels fluctuates.

The LES 1 satellite is about the size of a small car and is not likely to re-enter the atmosphere for a long time as the orbit is still relatively high. It poses no threat other than that caused by the thousands of other pieces of space junk currently in orbit. By now its likely that the on board batteries have now disintegrated so its likely that some other component failure has caused the transmitter to start up when its in sunlight bringing the ghost satellite back to life.

G3YPQ says its remarkable to think that electronics built nearly 5 decades ago, 12 years before Voyager 1, and long before microprocessors and integrated circuits, is still capable of working in the hostile environs of space. He adds that listening to the signal one can easily imagine the craft tumbling over and over every 4 seconds and the transmitter starting up as the sun rises on its solar panels. (G3YPQ)

Amateur Radio Newsline, Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

Hustler Bathtub Antenna

Jerry Bowen; KJ6SCC

I have to admit that for years I have been one of those packrats that save so much junk just because it may come in handy later. Earlier this year I decided to get rid of most of the junk that has been cluttering my home and so far I have made some progress.

Yesterday I began tearing out everything in the main bathroom in order to remodel it. When I threw the bathtub into the backyard I got to thinking, “Hmmm, with the tub upside down it kinda looks like the top of an automobile.”

Well, the packrat syndrome blasted my feeble brain as I thought about the several Hustler mobile antennas I had and wondered if the tub would simulate a car body enough to use the antennas on it.

I still have the tub and here’s a photo of a simulated setup. I ordered a couple of Hustler magnetic mounts and will try it out.

I’ll let you know later if it works or if the tub made a ceremonial trip to the dump.

Ham Brew Magazines Link

Here’s a link to several downloadable magazines. Each publication is loaded with electronic projrcts, most of which are easy to build. Projects include QRP trancievers, vertical and dipole antennas, Reviews of misc kits, transister theory and much more.
I plan on trying out a couple of the QRP Transceivers when I have more time.

http://www.arrowantennas.com/sub/hambrew.html
Hambrew Magazine was written by George DeGrazio (WF0K) who is now a silent key.

Below is a list of the issues that are available.

1993 Autumn	1994 Autumn	1994 Spring
1994 Summer	1994 Winter	1995 Autumn
1995 Spring	1995 Summer	1995 Winter
1996 Autumn	1996 Spring	1996 Summer
1996 Winter	1997 Spring	1997 Winter

A Little History

Out with Transatlantic cable In with Spark?

Prior to the invention of spark-generated radio transmission, the commercial potential of any form of wireless communication had come to nothing, despite minor successes of isolated applications. Certainly, commercial telegraphy and transatlantic cable companies had closely followed any effort made to render them obsolete. But they had hardly been concerned about any real threat.

And so it was with spark. Transatlantic cable offices were in the habit of exchanging Christmas greetings, and in 1901, less than two weeks after Marconi’s first successful east-west transatlantic transmission, the staff of the Sydney, Nova Scotia, cable station (ironically, located not far from Marconi’s eventual installation at Glace Bay) sent the following tongue-incheek Christmas message to officers in Liverpool:

Best Christmas greetings from North Sydney,
Hope you are sound in heart and kidney,
Next year will find us quite unable,
To send exchanges o’er the cable:
Marconi will our finish see,
The cable co’s have ceased to be;
No further need of automatics,
Retards, resistances and statics.
I’ll then across the ether sea,
Waft Christmas greetings unto thee.

Came the reassuring British response:

Don’t be alarmed, the cable co’s,
Will not be dead as you suppose.
Marconi may have been deceived,
In what he firmly has believed.
But be it so, or be it not,
The cable routes won’t be forgot;
His speed will never equal ours;
Where we take minutes, he’ll want hours.
Besides, his poor weak undulations,
Must be confined to their own stations;
This is for him to overcome,
Before we’re sent to our long home.
Don’t be alarmed my worthy friend,
Full many a year precedes our end.
How wrong they were.

Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club
presents

HAMFEST 2013

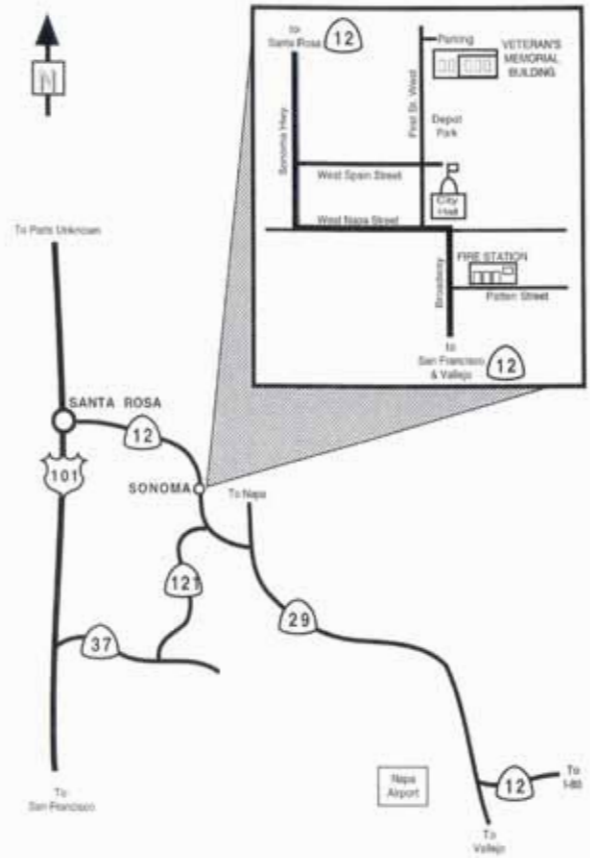
Saturday, April 27th,
8 am to 12 noon

Featuring
- Swap Meet (indoor and outdoor spaces)
- Breakfast
- VE Testing Session
- Station Demos
- Fox Hunt

PLUS: special exhibit of vehicles that support
emergency communications

Sonoma Veterans Memorial Building
126 First Street West
Sonoma
For info: 996-9203/996-4494

Admission: FREE
Breakfast: $6.00
Talk-in on 145.350 MHz (88.5 pl)
for flyer and map: www.vomarc.org



Map to Sonoma Hamfest 2013

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____

Street: _____

City: _____Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)

License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)

E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues	$15.00	_____
Each Family Member	$ 2.00	_____
Student	$ 5.00	_____
Repeater/Autopatch donation		_____
Call/Name badge	$11.00	_____

Optional ARRL membership

ARRL dues	$39.00	
ARRL dues (Senior)	$36.00	

Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof age

Total _____

Paid by CASH: _____ Check # _____

DATE: _____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143